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# Message Text

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43
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07

SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03 DODE-00 EB-11 PRS-01 DRC-01

FEA-02 /134 W
---------- 059364
R 170910Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1939
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
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AMEMBASSY TANANARIVA

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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USLO PEKING
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION USUN
CINCANTFLT
CINCUSNAVEUR
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
CINCUSNAVEUR
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMIDEASTFOR

S E C R E T TOKYO 6498

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR MARR PARM JA US
SUBJ: INDIAN OCEAN

REF: NEW DELHI 5616

SUMMARY: DESPITE JAPAN'S DEPENDENCE ON INDIAN OCEAN SEA LANES FOR TRANSPORT OF OIL, U.S, NAVAL ACTIVITY IN AREA IS NOT MAJOR ISSUE IN THIS COUNTRY, EITHER PUBLICLY, POLITICALLY, OR WITHIN BUREAUCRACY. IN FACT, GOJ IS CONTENT TO SEE ISSUE LIE DORMANT. GOJ WOULD NOT WELCOME PUBLIC DEBATE WHICH WOULD OBLIGE IT TO TAKE SIDES (EITHER FOR POSITION OF LITTORAL STATES OR THAT OF UNITED STATES), AND FEARS THAT MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONTROVERSY OVER US ACTIVITY IN INDIAN OCEAN WOULD ALSO STIMULATE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CRITICISM OF JAPAN'S SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. IF, HOWEVER, INDIAN OCEAN DOES BECOME ISSUE ON WHICH JAPAN MUST TAKE PUBLIC STAND, SOME U.S. STATEMENT SUPPORTING NAVAL LIMITATIONS IN AREA AND EXPRESSING US WILLINGNESS TO ENTER BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL TALKS FOR THAT PURPOSE WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR JAPAN TO SUPPORT US POSITION. END SUMMARY

1. ON THE BASIS OF RECENT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN EMBOFFS AND OFFICIALS OF THE FONOFF, DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT, AND JAPANESE SCHOLARS INTERESTED IN SECURITY ISSUES, THE EMBASSY OFFERS THE FOLLOWING BROAD ASSESSMENT OF JAPANESE THINKING CONCERNING AMERICAN NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.



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2. FOR JAPAN, INDIAN OCEAN IS FAR AWAY. JAPAN IS AWARE OF FRAGILITY OF ITS OIL LIFE LINE TO PERSIAN GULF BUT DOES NOT BELIEVE SECURITY OF LINE CAN BE PHYSICALLY GUARANTEED BY US NAVAL FORCES IN AREA OR INDEED BY MILITARY MEANS IN GENERAL. RECENT OIL EMBARGO REINFORCED THIS BELIEF AS AMERICAN MILITARY POWER DID NOT PREVENT PETROLEUM SUPPLIES FROM BEING RESTRICTED. RATHER, JAPAN BELIEVES IT MUST RELY PRIMARILY

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ON INTERNATIONAL NORM OF NAVIGATIONAL FREEDOM ON HIGH SEAS AND
ON MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL STABILITY TO KEEP THESE SHIPPING
LANES OPEN.

3. GOJ ACCEPTS THAT THERE MAY BE STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS
WHICH DICTATE THAT US DEPLOY NAVAL FORCES IN INDIAN OCEAN AND
ESTABLISH BASE AT DIEGO GARCIA. IN FACT, SOME GOJ OFFICIALS
THINKS THAT AMERICAN NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN IS NATURAL AND,
FROM STANDPOINT OF GLOBAL SECURITY, PROBABLY DESIRABLE.

4. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT JAPAN IS UNCONCERNED ABOUT
POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET-AMERICAN NAVAL RIVALRY IN AREA.
IN JAPAN'S VIEW, NOT ONLY WOULD SUCH ARMS RACE BE POTENTIALLY
DESTABILIZING, BUT IT WOULD FUEL CONTROVERSY ALREADY BEGUN
OVER US NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN. IN VIEW OF FACT THAT
SOME OF THESE VESSELS ARE HOMEPORTED IN JAPAN AND OTHERS ARE
SUPPORTED BY US BASES HERE, SUCH CONTROVERSY WOULD PROVIDE
AMMUNITION FOR OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES TO ATTACK ENTIRE
STRUCTURE OF SECURITY RELATIONSHIP AND BRING TO FORE ONCE AGAIN
ARGUMENT THAT US BASES IN JAPAN RISK JAPANESE INVOLVEMENT IN
GREAT POWER CONFRONTATION, IMPLY GOJ SUPPORT FOR
AMERICA'S GLOBAL POLITICAL/MILITARY POLICY, AND PREVENT JAPAN
FROM FORMULATING A FOREIGN POLICY BASED ON AN INDEPENDENT
ASSESSMENT OF ITS OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS. THIS WOULD CAUSE
GOJ EMBARRASSMENT AND POLITICAL DIFFICULTY. MOREOVER,
INTERNATIONAL DEBATE ON ISSUE MIGHT FORCE GOJ TO CHOOSE
PUBLICLY BETWEEN US POSITION AND THAT OF INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL
STATES, THIRD WORLD IN GENERAL, AND PERHAPS CHINA. THIS IS
PUBLIC
CHOICE JAPAN WOULD PREFER NOT TO MAKE, PARTICULARLY AT TIME
WHEN IT IS UNDERTAKING CONCERTED EFFORT TO IMPROVE RELATIONS
WITH THIRD WORLD. IF ISSUE WERE PRESENTED IN SUCH WAY THAT
JAPAN WAS FORCED TO TAKE A STAND FOR OR AGAINST DISARMAMENT
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IN REGION, GOJ WOULD BE FACED WITH ADDITIONAL DILEMMA OF
EITHER IGNORING ONE OF ITS BASIC FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES
(INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL) OR OPPOSING POSITION OF
UNITED STATES.

5. FURTHER CONCERN WITHIN SOME ELEMENTS OF GOJ IS THAT
INCREASED AMERICAN NAVAL DEPLOYMENT IN INDIAN OCEAN MAY
IMPLY SMALLER US PRESENCE IN PACIFIC, WHICH IS AREA OF PRIMARY
SECURITY INTEREST TO JAPAN.

6. IN SUM, GOJ IS NOT OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO OUR PLANS
FOR DIEGO GARCIA OR TO INCREASED MEMBERS OF AMERICAN SHIPS IN
INDIAN OCEAN. GOJ WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, WELCOME PUBLIC DEBATE
ON ISSUE BECAUSE OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL
PROBLEMS THAT IT WOULD CREATE. IN EVENT THAT JAPAN IS FORCED

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TO TAKE PUBLIC STAND, WE BELIEVE THAT SOME U.S. STATEMENT ENDORSING ARMS LIMITATIONS IN INDIAN OCEAN AND EXPRESSING WILLINGNESS TO ENTER BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL NEGOTIONS FOR THAT PURPOSE WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR JAPAN TO SUPPORT U.S. POSITION. IN ADDITION, GOJ WOULD ALWAYS WELCOME FULL AND CANDID BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON OUR STRATEGIC THINKING ON THIS QUESTION.

7. EMBASSY SHARES FEELING EXPRESSED BY MANY POSTS THAT IN ORDER FULLY TO UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT US POLICY EMBASSY NEEDS HAVE, FOR OUR OWN BACKGROUND, DETAILED EXPLANATION OF CONSIDERATIONS ON WHICH OUR INDIAN OCEAN NAVY POLICY IS BASED AND COGENT STATEMENT OF OUR INTERESTS IN REGION.
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